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SPEECH

OF THE

HONORABLE JOHN ROSE,

On the 2nd reading of the Militia Bill,---6th May, 1862.

Memorandum.—The within Report has been published at the request of a number of friends. As now printed, the observations originally made have been somewhat amplified—particularly in regard to the quotations—the substance of which only was given in debate.

MR. SPEAKER—

THE Bill before the House is one of the greatest interest, inasmuch as it not only commits the Province to a large expenditure, but because it involves a principle of Colonial self-defence, which must have very important bearings on our present position and future relations towards England. I will not at this stage discuss any of its details, but content myself with observing that it proposes to organize and keep up in a state of moderate efficiency a force of 50,000 men, with a reserve of equal amount,—to provide that force with arms, clothing and ammunition, and to erect arsenals and military storehouses at the most suitable places throughout the Province. These services, apart from the first cost of organization, must entail an annual expenditure of nearly a seventh part of our gross revenue, at a time when our financial condition is the reverse of flourishing, and when indeed a heavy deficit has to be met. Some Honorable Members complain that the Government has not apprised them of the views which England entertains on this subject, and ask why no correspondence has been produced,

and others that no proper estimate of the expense has been given, and that the revenue of the country cannot stand the additional burden intended to be imposed. But though I feel the full force of the objections which, in a financial point of view, may be urged against our undertaking so comprehensive and large a measure, there are other considerations of a higher and paramount nature which impel us at the present time to place the defensive power of the country on the most efficient footing. The question of Colonial Defence is one which has lately attracted much attention both here and in England, and I am glad that my Hon. friend the Minister of Finance took occasion to refer to it in concluding the speech which he has just made. The views which a certain class of persons in England entertain with reference to it are no doubt calculated in themselves to throw some discouragement on our efforts, placing, as they do, the continuance of the connection between the mother country and the Colonies solely on the footing of pecuniary interest ; but I think the present a fitting opportunity of shewing that those persons—I can hardly call them a party—do not represent English public opinion, and that they have no effect in influencing the policy by which the responsible Ministers of the Crown are now or are ever likely hereafter to be guided. It is a fitting occasion also for demonstrating what the real feeling of Canada is—of shewing that we understand our position as Colonists, forming an integral portion of the British Empire, that we are alive to the dangers to which we are exposed and that while we will assume *our* just share of the burden of defence—we expect and will rely on the performance by England of the duty which *she* owes to us. (Hear, hear). I wish also to point out the great misapprehension which apparently exists at home as to the extent of the burden to which we are supposed, of late years, to have subjected England ; to shew how insignificant in amount it ordinarily is, and how much Canada has all this time been

doing for herself. I do this not in a captious spirit of recrimination, but with the sincere and single minded desire of making our relative positions understood, that each country may be stimulated by seeing the willing co-operation of the other, and its readiness to assume a just proportion of the common duty, of preserving the integrity of the Empire.

We know, Sir, that we are called on to arm not on account of any danger likely to arise from our own Policy or quarrels;—It is from the consequence of Imperial Policy that our danger springs—a Policy which we have no share in directing. But the risk is incident to our position. We accept it because we value too highly the blessing of living under the British Crown—the privileges which, as British subjects, we enjoy; we prize our constitutional liberty too much—our attachment to the Throne and Institutions of England are too deep rooted to make us willing to purchase immunity from this danger, at the price of separation. (Hear, hear). I believe that the Crown of England, the government and the great body of the people of England appreciate such feelings, and that they have as little sympathy as we have with those who talk of abandoning their Colonies, simply because they happen to be a source of danger or a source of expense. So long as we do not find the views of the class I speak of directing the policy of England, we are not justified in allowing their mere opinions to influence our conduct or make us lukewarm in the work of providing for the future defence of our soil. That party seems to forget that the acquisition of dominion, whether by conquest or treaty, entails the *obligation* of protection; they look only on their Colonies as an article out of which money is to be made;—and that when they cease to be profitable, when they cost more than they can get, in return out of them, they are to be at liberty to abandon us; they consider that to increase in material prosperity is the first and only duty of a state; and that any thing which does

not contribute to amassing wealth is to be neglected, even if involving a disregard of the obligations of good faith and national honor. Practical as the present age is, I do not believe that abstract calculations of profit or loss will ever be the issue by which the retention or abandonment of British dominion will be determined.

Mr. Goldwin Smith, the most advanced champion of the Anti Colonial party tells us it is true "that the interest of Canada, as well as of England, is on the side of Separate Government. That we gain nothing by the present system, but the payment by England of our Naval and Military Defences, which as it leads us to neglect the duty of self defence, we will in the end find no gain, but a heavy loss." He tells us that "timely separation is good for both parties, and especially so for the Colonists," and speaks of our future destiny "*if we will only go forward like men to meet it, instead of clinging like frightened children to the skirts of the old world.*" He asks "if we hope that England will always go on paying for our Army and Navy," and tells us that "to hope, this hope is too much from the sufferance even of the English people."

Mr. Smith is a man of no ordinary power of mind, and one whose gifts should have placed him above the level of those whose views are swayed by the mere practical instincts of commercial advantage. Are great national questions to be tried by the mere test of the balance sheet? Does he care nothing for the power and greatness of England—nothing for the dishonor which would attach to the throne by throwing off loyal and devoted subjects, or what is the same, leaving them unprotected, because the responsibility incident to the acquisition of dominion cannot be borne without expense? Does history furnish any instance of the kind? It has taken centuries to consolidate this mighty Empire; will the

people of England consent to its dismemberment so long as a willing allegiance is given to a common Sovereign, and so long as her subjects in her outlying dominions are ready to assume the burdens, which the privileges of freedom entail? We do not merit the taunt of clinging to the skirts of the old world, as I shall presently show when I come to speak of what the hardy and energetic settlers of the country have done to reclaim it from the wilderness, despite the rigours of our northern climate, and the material obstacles they have had to overcome. If there is one quality above another to which they can with truth lay claim, it is self-reliance and independence.

It is satisfactory to pass from such theories of philosophers and political economists to the practical views expressed by those who are responsible for their opinions as directing the national policy. Any one who reads the evidence given by the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Grey, Mr. Elliott or Mr. Merivale before the recent Committee of the House of Commons, must rise from the perusal of it, with the conviction that the interests and defence of the Colonial Empire will not be disregarded. Nothing can be more just or more statesmanlike, than the footing on which they put our mutual relations. I think it of so much importance that there should be no misconception on this head, that the zeal and readiness which this Country has always shewn to assume its fair share of the burden should not be checked, especially at the present critical juncture of our history, that I must trespass on the time of the house by quoting one or two passages expressive of their views. (Hear Hear.) I begin with Lord Grey, because it was he who originated the system of withdrawing troops and of imposing on the Colonies a greater share of the duty of providing for their own internal tranquillity. But he was most careful in carrying this system into effect to guard against any possible misapprehension on our part of his motives.

In an elaborate despatch to Lord Elgin, dated in March, 1851, he says: "regarding Canada as a most important and valuable part of the Empire, and believing the maintenance of the connection between the Mother Country and the Colony to be of the highest advantage to both it is far from being the view of Her Majesty's Government that the general power of the Empire is not to be used in the protection of this part of Her Majesty's Dominions." In speaking of the reduction of the Military Force he says: "Her Majesty's Government are the more induced to adopt this view of the subject *because they are prepared to recommend to Parliament that assistance of the same kind with that which has proved so eminently useful to Canada as the construction of the St. Lawrence Canals should be extended to her in respect of another public work calculated to be hardly less beneficial to her than these Canals.* In another despatch I will explain to your Lordship the views of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the means by which it is hoped that the construction of the *Quebec and Halifax Railway* may be accomplished. I only advert to this subject at present for the purpose of observing that while the credit of this country is exerted to enable Canada to extend her public works and to develop her resources I feel confident that the Parliament of Canada will readily co-operate with Her Majesty's Government in adopting measures for diminishing the charge on the British Treasury for the defence of the province."

We thus see, Mr. Speaker, that it was intended to accompany this diminution of force by the adoption of measures which would relieve us from the danger incident to our isolated position and place us at all seasons of the year within reach of England. Indeed Lord Grey distinctly says in his work on Colonial Policy: "The call upon Canada to take upon herself a larger share than heretofore of the charges incurred on her account was intended

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"to be coupled with an application to Parliament not only to pro-
 vide for the salary of the Governor General but also to give the
 assistance of the credit of the British Treasury towards the ex-
 ecution of the projected line of Railway for connecting the British
 Provinces of North America."

Passing now to the general question of the Colonial relation,
 the views of Lord Grey are no less satisfactory. They are so
 apposite that at the risk of presuming more on the forbearance of
 the house than I could wish I must quote them:

"I consider then, says he, that the British Colonial Empire
 ought to be maintained, principally because I do not consider
 that the nation would be justified in throwing off the responsi-
 bility it has incurred by the acquisition of this dominion, and be-
 cause I believe that much of the power and influence of this
 country depends upon its having large colonial possessions
 in different parts of the world.

"The possession of a number of steady and faithful allies, in
 various quarters of the Globe, will surely be admitted to add
 greatly to the strength of any nation, while no alliance between
 independent states can be so close and intimate as the connec-
 tion which unites the Colonies to the United Kingdom as parts of
 the Great British Empire. Nor ought it to be forgotten that the
 power of a nation does not depend merely on the amount of
 physical force it can command, but rests, in no small degree,
 upon opinion and moral influence; in this respect British power
 would be diminished by the loss of our Colonies, to a degree
 which it would be difficult to estimate; hence if it is an advan-
 tage, not for the sake of domineering over other countries but
 with a view to our own security, to form part of a powerful
 nation rather than of a weak one (and considering the many
 examples we have seen of the injustice to which weak ones are
 compelled to submit, this can hardly admit of a question), it

" seems to follow, that the tie which binds together all the
 " different and distant portions of the British Empire, so that
 " their united strength may be wielded for their common protec-
 " tion, must be regarded as an object of extreme importance to
 " the interest of the mother country and her dependencies; to the
 " latter it is no doubt of far greater importance than to the former,
 " because, while still forming comparatively small and weak
 " communities, they enjoy, in return for their allegiance to the
 " British Crown, all the security and consideration which belong
 " to them as members of one of the most powerful states in the
 " world.

" No foreign power ventures to attack or interfere with the
 " smallest of them, while every colonist carries with him, to the
 " remotest quarters of the globe which he may visit in trading or
 " other pursuits, that protection which the character of a British
 " subject every where confers, and can depend, in any difficulties,
 " or under any oppression to which he may be exposed, on the
 " assistance of Her Majesty's diplomatic and consular servants,
 " supported, if necessary, by the whole power of the Empire.

" But I should regard it as a very unworthy mode of con-
 " sidering this subject, if it were to be looked at with a view only
 " to the interests of this country, as that word is usually under-
 " stood; I conceive that, by the acquisition of its Colonial Do-
 " minions, the nation has incurred a responsibility of the highest
 " kind, which it is not at liberty to throw off. The authority of the
 " British Crown is at this moment the most powerful instrument,
 " under providence, of maintaining peace and order in many
 " extensive regions of the earth, and thereby assists in diffusing
 " amongst millions of the human race the blessings of chris-
 " tianity and civilization. Supposing it were clear (which I am far
 " from admitting) that a reduction of our national expenditure

"(otherwise impracticable,) to the extent of a few hundred thousands a year, could be effected by withdrawing our authority and protection from our numerous colonies, should we be justified, for the sake of such a saving, in taking this step, and thus abandoning the duty which seems to have been cast upon us? * * * * *

"To say nothing of higher motives, and of the duty which I conceive to be no less obligatory upon nations than upon individuals, of using the power and the advantages entrusted to them by providence to advance the welfare of mankind, I would ask whether, even in mere money, there would not be some thing to set off against the saving of expense from the abandonment of our colonies? On the other side of the account we have to put the destruction of British property which would thus be occasioned, and the annihilation of lucrative branches of our commerce, by allowing anarchy and bloodshed to arrest the peaceful industry which now creates the means of paying for the British goods consumed daily in larger quantities, by the numerous and various populations now emerging from barbarism under our protection."

"It is true there are several of our colonies to which the last observations do not directly apply; but the policy of abandoning a part of our colonial empire could scarcely be adopted, without giving so great a shock to the feeling of confidence and security in the remainder, as greatly to increase the difficulty of maintaining it; and I must add, that it appears to me very doubtful whether even the colonies most capable of governing themselves, and which have no uncivilized tribes to deal with, from whom any danger could be apprehended, would not for some time have much difficulty in maintaining their present state of tranquility and security, both externally and internally, if their

"connection with the mother country were suddenly dissolved."

* * * * *

"I have thought it necessary to state thus strongly my dissent from the views of those who wish to dismember the British empire by abandoning the colonies, because it is impossible not to observe that this policy unworthy of a great nation, and unwise as I consider it to be, is not only openly advocated by one active party in the country, but is also hardly less effectually supported by persons occupying an important position in Parliament, and who, while they hesitate to avow their adherence to it, hold language which obviously leads in the same direction, and advocate measures the adoption of which would inevitably bring about this result." (Hear, hear.)

I had on a former debate, Mr. Speaker, occasion to quote the remarkable language of the Duke of Newcastle, in a speech delivered in February, 1854—in which he said: "It is the duty of this Country (England) to protect her colonial possession at all hazard and at all expense." Equally clear is his language in 1861: "I think," say he in answer to a question of Mr. Rœbuck, "that one of the duties which devolve on the mother Country is the defence of a Colony. I do not know what advantage a Colony would find in its relative position, if the Mother Country did not protect it. Just on account of the peculiar position of Canada, I think the Imperial Government is bound to keep up a certain amount of force in time of peace and a much larger force in the event of war with those parties who would be aggressive. Canada stands in a different position from any other Colony we have.* * * " Again, when asked whether if in time of peace the announcement was made that every Imperial soldier was to be withdrawn, it would induce the Colonies to raise a larger local force or to offer a contribution to maintain Imperial Troops, he replies: "I think it might produce just this difference—that it

"*would cause the whole Volunteer Spirit to cease—that they would contribute nothing to maintain an Imperial Force—but he adds: I have no doubt that the Colony would make very great exertions in time of actual danger. I have no doubt that so long as the Imperial Government shews a disposition to support them in time of peace and to prevent war, that they would in time of war behave generously and properly towards supporting the Imperial Government in their own defence and in maintaining the general interest of the Empire.*"

It ought certainly to be assuring to the people of the country to know that their position and feelings were so well understood, and I venture, Mr. Speaker, to say that he has not overestimated the generous and patriotic co-operation which England would receive at our hands in case of need. (Hear, hear.) There is no sacrifice, I believe, Sir, to which the people of Canada are not prepared to submit, if they are appreciated and met in this generous spirit. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Gladstone, it is true, speaks of the English Colonial system "as a novel invention of which, up to the present time, England is the Patentee, and that no one has shewn a disposition to evade the patent." He says, "*that the Colonies should be made primarily responsible for their own defence,*" and when asked what he means by that expression, he says, "it is best exemplified by the state of opinion and feeling that prevailed among the old American Colonies." But does he consider that their defence was an easy matter—ours a most difficult—that they had no foreign enemy to fear but France; while our danger springs from a country conterminous for thousand of miles with our own,—inhabited by a most powerful and warlike people numbering 30 millions; abounding in extraordinary resources and whose facilities of communications enable them at any time to collect masses of Troops on our very borders.—The illustration

fails entirely, because the condition and the circumstances of the two are entirely different.

We know that be the cause of rupture with America what it may,—the horrors of war will be at our doors, that whatever the issue, we must be the sufferers, and can by no possibility be gainers. We know also from experience that Canada may have no concern or interest in the quarrel except as an integral portion of the Empire. What was the question of the right of search to us? What interest had we in Ruatan? What in the Oregon Boundary? What in the enlistment question? What in the Island of St. Juan? What in European interference in Mexico? What, save indeed as British subjects, interested in the honor of our flag, in the Trent affair? And yet, Sir, with all this before us, we will not exchange our position, nor seek to escape from the serious consequences which our relations with England may entail upon us. This common danger ought to unite us closer together, not merely from considerations of mutual interest, but from generous sympathies that spring from mutual self devotion, and generous sacrifice. (Hear, hear.)

I may be permitted in concluding my observations on this head, to quote from a speech of Lord Palmerston in the debate on Army Estimates in 1825 :

“ It may be a fair question for speculation perhaps how far it is
 “ for the benefit of a country to possess Colonies—whether it is
 “ better she should confine herself to commerce and improve-
 “ ments at home, or form settlements abroad ; but there can be
 “ no doubt as to the course which ought to be pursued by a
 “ country having already in its possession such Colonies as
 “ belong to England. As far as civilization extends in the
 “ world—from the most northern point in America, to the
 “ southernmost extremity of Asia—the formation of British

"settlements and the accumulation of British wealth, is to be found. To abandon possessions gained at the cost of so much blood and treasure—many of them important outposts for the protection of our commerce, and the security of our dominion, would be a violation of public faith, and a forfeiture of national honour."

Having thus, Mr. Speaker, as I trust, shewn that the Statesmen of England do not look on our future destiny with indifference, I wish to make a few observations on the general complaint touching the amount of Imperial expenditure on our defence, and also to shew that we have not only faithfully implemented, in spirit and in letter, the compact made in terms of Lord Grey's despatch, but have *entirely* relieved the mother country from providing in any way for our internal tranquillity.

It is necessary to dissociate Canada from the case of other colonies, and what do we find: that in ordinary times she has since been garrisoned but by two regiments—one of which is the the Canadian Rifles. The gross expenditure on all British America is under £400,000 per annum. One half at least of this is chargeable to the Lower Provinces, of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, in which is the great arsenal of Halifax—maintained for Imperial purposes. Of the £200,000 expended in Canada £170,000 represents the ordinary pay, rations and clothing of the troops, who are maintained here more cheaply than they could be in England. The only items really and specially chargeable against us are the items of transport and the charges for barracks and fortifications. Dividing these in the same proportion they will be found to be under £30,000 a year.

Well might the Duke of Newcastle say, as he did in his evidence before this Committee, that it is extremely difficult to argue these question on principles of business, that "*it is a very small ground*

“to take—and that it is but a *flea bite to the Imperial government.*”

But, Sir, when Canada was promised Imperial aid (when the Military Force was reduced,) towards giving her Railway communication with England through British Territory, and although that aid has not been given, has she not faithfully relieved the mother country from the duties she was asked to assume? We organized a most efficient Volunteer Force, clothed, armed and drilled them; this force has since performed the duty of aiding the civil power on all occasions of popular disturbance. They have become a most efficient and available body, even for purposes of war and ready for active service. We have adopted measures for the protection of all the fisheries in the gulph and on the coasts, so that the services of no British ship of war have ever been called in requisition. We have maintained the Ordnance Canals at a heavy annual loss to ourselves; we have built and maintained light-houses at remote and almost inaccessible points, at a very heavy outlay, and which are free to the shipping of all nations; we have devoted all our resources to the construction of works of internal communication, which would greatly facilitate the defence of the colony in case of aggression. Sir, we have been acting the part of a nation rather than of a colony. We have *not* been clinging helplessly to the skirts, nor relying on the aid of the old world. By our interprise and energy we have developed the resources of this country with a rapidity to which the history of few colonies affords any parallel. (Hear, hear.) True we have not as yet, because it has been unnecessary, withdrawn the great mass of our people from the pursuits of industry to train them to the art of war, but when danger threatened, was any backwardness evinced—or was an uncertain sound heard in any village, town or hamlet from Gaspé to Lake Superior?

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The case of Canada has unfortunately been mixed up with all the other Colonies, and fortified positions, some of which from their circumstances can do little for themselves, and the British ratepayer is told that he is heavily taxed for *Colonial Defence*. The expenditure on Hong Kong for instance is taken; that is not a Colony, but a station maintained for imperial purposes only—So is Malta with its three garrisons and score of men of war. Mauritius is necessary for the naval supremacy of England in those seas, and a military force is necessary in Western Australia because England chuses to send her convicts there. There is a great fallacy in generalising on the subject of colonial military expenditure; but no one who investigates the subject can deny that the force maintained in times of peace in Canada has of late been reduced to the minimum.

I have dwelt, Mr. Speaker, perhaps longer on this subject than there was any occasion for so doing; but before I leave it, let me in conclusion advert to one fact which should counterbalance any unfavourable impression that may have been produced in Canada by the discussion of these theories, a fact to which I also alluded in a former debate. When the risk of collision with the United States was recently apprehended—was there any hesitancy on the part of the British Government in despatching troops to our relief? and in what spirit was their promptitude met by the Country? Was there a voice raised in Parliament to censure them either for their policy, or for the expense they had incurred in these measures of precaution? Never was such unanimity shown in supporting a Government. Seldom such gratifying mention of the conduct of any Colonist as that in which our readiness to stand by the fortunes and throne of England was spoken of!! (Hear, hear!) There were no doctrinaires *then* to raised their voice against the precautionary measures the Government had taken—none to recommend that we should be left to ourselves;—and so depend upon it, it will

ever be when actual danger arise. I cannot help quoting here, as illustrative of this, a passage which one might consider almost *inspired* from Mr. Merivale's admirable work. Speaking of the motives of abstract practical philosophy as influencing the retention of colonial dominion, he says: "The sense of national honor—the pride of blood—the tenacious spirit of such defence—the sympathies of kindred communities—the instincts of a dominant race—the vague but generous desire to spread our civilization and religion over the world; these are impulses which the student in his closet may disregard, but the statesman *dares not, for they will assuredly prevail as they often have prevailed before, and silence mere utilitarian argument whenever a crisis call them forth.*"

A crisis lately did call them forth, and well and generously was it met. (Hear, hear.)

Having thus, as I trust, shewn that we need have no apprehension that the future will find England less ready than the past to defend us; does this Bill provide the means of placing the whole defensive power of Canada in a condition to be available to co-operate with her when occasion shall arise? I think, Sir, we should not be fulfilling our duty if we were to stop short of that. We do not want our yeomanry to be perfect in the graces of military exercise and drill; but we want such an organisation of the whole adult population as that the State can avail itself of their services on the shortest notice. I have heard it urged by many, for whose opinions I have great respect that we ought rather to have a perfect small force than an irregular large one, and that it would even be better to make a money contribution to keep a certain number of imperial troops in the Colony. I differ entirely from this view. It is of the first importance, I think, to make our whole population

self-reliant, to instil into them the notion that we must defend ourselves, and to accustom them to the use of arms. We do not want even a small force in time of peace,—we want the whole population in time of war. I trust we may for many years, and for ever, live in peace and amity with the United States, but we cannot disguise from ourselves that irrespective of the dangers that exist in the present unsettled condition of that country, there are at all times peculiar elements of danger in the American population which the government, however pacific, cannot always control. I am no alarmist, Mr. Speaker, but it is impossible for any man to peruse the correspondence which took place last year between the American Government and those of England and France without rising from it with the conviction that we escaped war on many occasions almost by a miracle; and that many of the elements of danger yet remain, any one of which may involve the two countries in a controversy which can be settled by the arbitrament of the sword alone.

The surest way to avert war is to be prepared to resist attack. For the defence of such a Country as this dependence must mainly be placed on the people themselves. Suppose England could throw in 50 or 75,000 regular soldiers, they could not protect the whole of our frontier. Besides irregular troops who know the roads, are accustomed to the woods, are far better adapted for defensive work in Canada than regulars are. They want but organisation—a moderate proficiency in the use of arms, to be accustomed to move in bodies together, and to have the habit of discipline. Under this Bill we shall have 50,000 efficient men within a few months, with a reserve of 50,000 more, and in case of war a third levy will give us, with very short preparation, a defensive force of 150,000 men. I do not wish to commit myself to the details of the Bill, but I fully approve of the general plan. I feel, however, that the expense which must accompany this, will

be a severe pressure on the people, but it is like paying so much for insurance against invasion. Our very existence as a people is involved. A week's occupation of any one of our cities by a hostile force would entail far heavier burdens to make it good, than the maintenance of our Militia Bill. We have two great advantages in Canada over the Americans; we have *drilled Officers* ready to instruct our men, and in whom they have confidence; and our people eminently understand that in which American character fails, the necessity of obedience and submission to discipline. To these defects the disasters of the American Army have been in the main attributable.

Let it not, however, be supposed that the amount of appropriation, whatever it may be, represents the sacrifices which the people of this country are about to make. We have no rich class, no men of leisure here as in England, to whom the work of drilling is a pastime. Every man who gives a day's time here withdraws so much from some pursuit which he follows for the maintenance of his family, and for which the mere pay is no compensation whatever. It is in fact a contribution of so much of his individual substance to the cause of patriotism, of which the payment by the State, large as it may be, represents but a slight proportion. It is all the more praiseworthy because it does not spring from mere military instinct, nor from any vain love of display. The most superficial observer can see that it is undertaken as a serious business and duty, and springs from the very highest and noblest of motives. Even now, (I speak from personal observation in the city which I represent,) in anticipation of this Bill, we find middle aged men immersed in business giving up hours every day to learn the manual exercise, merchants and professional men standing, side by side, in the same ranks with their storemen and clerks; we find tradesmen, mechanics and labourers, after toiling all day, assembling in some store or

drill-room at night, devoting the whole evening to the hard and unattractive work of company drill. The sacrifices, both pecuniary and personal, which the Volunteers of this country have made are not known as they ought to be. Depend upon it, Mr. Speaker, that such a people cannot be conquered; they may for a time be overpowered by superior numbers, but they cannot be long held in subjection. If the same feeling continues to animate us, with the power of England to back us, and with such a country and such a climate as ours, we need have no fears for the ultimate result against any enemy, however numerous or powerful, which undertakes offensive operations on Canada.

My honorable friend, the Attorney General West, in introducing this Bill, described it as an Enabling Bill, and that it in no way committed the House to the whole force of 50,000 men. But as I understand the Bill, it is adapted both in principle and in the machinery of its details to such an organization. You have divided the Province into a certain number of Districts, with a certain population to each, and propose to raise a certain number of men in each. You have adjutants and drill-sergeants for each; and you may, just as well, even on grounds of economy, call out the whole complement of men, even if you give them fewer days of drill.

My honorable friend has said that the number which the Government will call out must depend on the state of the finances and of the likelihood of danger, and he says the cloud which lately appeared to warn us has passed away. But, Sir, can any man say that it will not re-appear to-morrow—or that instead of appearing in the distant horizon no bigger than a man's hand to warn us, its approach may be heralded only by the blackness and fury with which it will burst over our heads. (Hear! Hear!) Depend upon it, great as the financial responsibility is in assuming this additional charge, far greater is the responsibility of neglecting the warn-

ings of the past, and disregarding the events which are taking place on our borders. If war, with all its horrors, comes on us unprepared—if the two loyal and chivalrous races that people Canada, find themselves without organization—without arms—without drilled instructors—without learning the rudiments of self-defence—there will be a lasting and grave responsibility on those whose duty it was to arouse the country from the dangerous sleep of false security into which it had fallen.

The financial reasons I admit are weighty, but let us see whether some means cannot be devised of lessening their weight.

I do not fear, Sir, that England will be slow to provide us with arms and equipments, if we go to her in the proper spirit. She has never been ungenerous,—still less unjust to those who espouse her cause. I do not believe that, except for Provincial Armouries and Drill Grounds, the first outlay will cost us any thing. So large an organization as is proposed need not and ought not to be kept up longer than the danger which calls it forth shall exist. If the means cannot otherwise be obtained, it is an object for which a loan might fairly be raised, and for such an object we might hope to obtain the credit of the Imperial Government. Suppose, Sir, we should get, say £700,000 sterling at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. that would entail a permanent charge on the country of but £24,500 sterling a year. This sum, with what we now pay, would amply sustain the force for four years after which the danger would either have been met or passed away, and we should be left with a perfect organisation, to keep which up afterwards, a very small annual charge would suffice. This £700,000 would give \$70,000 for armories and drill fields, a million of dollars as an annual grant for the first two years, and \$800,000 for the next two. By adding the amount of the present grants, the difference in interest, and the direct return from substitutes and fines, which I estimate at \$100,000 only, during the 4

years, (and which might be dispensed with altogether,) you would thus, as I have shewn, accomplish the whole object of the bill at the cost of £24,500 sterling a year on posterity, assuming that the arms and equipments were given to us.

If our revenue was flourishing—if in fact we could afford the first outlay, as well as the annual charge, it might be more satisfactory for us to rely wholly on our own resources; but we have had a chronic deficiency for some years, and I do not see how we are to make it good. The necessity for assuming so large an annual burden calls on us to practise economy in every department of Government.

I will not now enter on that question, but content myself with saying that while I believe the country is prepared to submit to any needful sacrifice for its defence, it will expect the practice of a strict economy in all other branches of the public service in order that this the paramount object may be effectually carried out. If it is not to be done efficiently, better not do it at all.

I hope the Government will also see that whatever is necessary in a military point of view in the way of fortifications and Lake defence is provided for. The joint commissioner now sitting will doubtless make proper suggestions on that head, and it would be both premature and improper to discuss now in what respect or where we are vulnerable. If this country places its whole population in an organized condition at the disposal of England for purposes of defence, there is a corresponding duty of no ordinary magnitude and gravity devolved on her. Indeed Mr. Gladstone was pointedly asked by the Committee on Colonial Military Expenditure the question, and his answer is eminently satisfactory.

When questioned whether on the supposition that it was possible for troops to be raised in the colonies sufficient for their defence, according to the judgment of the colonists as to their requirements, he would contemplate when necessary a contri-

bation by England towards the maintenance of these troops, he replies : " I do not look with so much anxiety to the question of the amount of contribution as I do to the transfer of responsibility :—that is what I really desire. I think that if the colonists and colonial government, so far as it is really colonial, had the primary responsibility *resting upon them, no difficulty would occur between the colonies and this country upon a mere question of amount.*" I trust therefore, Sir, that though we ourselves assume the primary obligation towards our own Militia, the question of contribution, by England, may form the subject of negotiation between the two Governments, and I feel assured that England will not be insensible to any just claims we may have upon her.

In connection with the subject of fortifications and the defence of the Lakes, I should be wanting in duty if I omitted to refer to the fact that this question has recently engaged the attention of the Government and Legislature of the United States. A special committee of congress, which was named, has recently made its report, and that report contains matter of the deepest interest and concern to Canada. They recommend the erection of shore fortifications at various commanding positions—the immediate establishment of a national foundry for the manufacture of arms and ordnance at Chicago ;—three Naval Depots one on Lake Ontario—another on Lake Erie and another on Lake Michigan. They throw out the hint that the treaty of 1817, which limits the naval force to be maintained on the lakes, may have no application to Lake Michigan as being entirely within their own territory—and that they may therefore build and arm ships at Chicago. By fortifying the Straits of Mackinaw—which is strongly urged,—they say that the entrance to Lake Michigan is closed. Their recommendations are of so remarkable a character, that I will read one of them in order that public attention may be drawn to the question :

" Probably the most important strategic place on the lakes, they
 " say, is the Straits of Mackinaw. This Strait constitutes the
 " door to Lake Michigan, around which lake lie the States of Mi-
 " chigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin, with an aggregate
 " population amounting to nearly five millions. * * *
 " The commerce of this lake will exceed 200,000,000 a year.
 " The great granary of the Union has its depots on the borders of
 " this lake. It can be defended by adequate fortifications at the
 " Straits of Mackinaw about 3 miles wide. * * *
 " The importance of having a great Inland Sea like Lake Michi-
 " gan converted into a secure harbour *where fleets and navies may*
 " *be gathered in security, where may be collected magazines of*
 " *arms and munitions and provisions can scarcely be exaggerated.*
 " Lake Michigan entirely within our own territory, unapproachable
 " by land and inaccessible by water by any foreign enemy, except
 " through a narrow strait or entrance, is a position of immense im-
 " portance and the policy of closing up its entrance is too obvious to
 " need illustration. Mackinaw should be made the Gibraltar of the
 " Upper Lakes."

I have endeavoured to discuss these delicate questions and
 this all important measure in a dispassionate spirit, and with
 a view to arrive at an honest conclusion as to the duties we
 owe to ourselves, to the Empire at large, and what the rest of
 the Empire owes to us. I feel assured that this Country will
 not seek to evade its measure of obligation, in a matter fraught
 with such momentous issues, and I feel equally sure that we
 may firmly rely on the unpolluted honor of the Crown, and the
 magnanimity and justice of the people of England. (Hear, hear.)